

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the outstanding Office Action. Claims 20-57 are currently pending. Claims 1-19 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 20, 21, 24, 29, 34, 35 and 36-39 have been amended slightly and claims 40-57 have been added to afford Applicants a scope of protection they deem themselves entitled to in view of Applicants' disclosure. Claims 20, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 50 are independent. Applicants respectfully submit the following.

Allowable Subject Matter – New Claims

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 20-36. In order to commensurate the scope of the claims with a scope of patent protection Applicants deem themselves entitled to, some of the allowed claims have been slightly amended and new claims 40-57, substantially corresponding to the allowed claims, are now presented. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims are still in condition for allowance and that new claims 40-57 are patentable over the prior art. To that end, Applicants respectfully request favorable review of the new claims.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claims 37-39 were rejected as being indefinite for the reasons pointed out on page 2 of the Action. While not acknowledging the merits of the Action's position on the conformance of these claims to the requirements of § 112, second paragraph, Applicants have amended the claims in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims as presented by this response meet the requirements of §112, second paragraph and respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-19 were rejected under §103 for the reasons set out on page 3 of the Action. While not addressing the merits of the Action's position on the patentability of these claims, Applicants have canceled the claims without prejudice and disclaimer of subject matter. Thus, this rejection is now moot and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

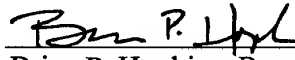
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants submit that the issues raised in the outstanding Office Action have all been addressed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of the amended allowed claims and consideration of newly presented claims 40-57. Early passage to issue of the present application is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 692-6803. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: August 11, 2003



Brian P. Hopkins, Reg. No. 42,669
Attorney for Applicants
Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris
Glovsky & Popeo, P.C.
Chrysler Center
666 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10017
Telephone No.: 212-935-3000
Facsimile No.: 212-983-3115